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Lordy, lordy, looks who's 40!

THAT ARTS COLUMN

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This year, The Art Complex Museum celebrates its 40th anniversary of bringing diverse and exciting cultural programs to the South Shore, often, at no charge. Over the years, the museum has been so much a fabric of the lives of Duxbury residents that, at times, it seems as though it has always been here - introducing children to the Japanese tradition of the tea ceremony, offering area high school students a chance to develop and install their own sculptures on its grounds, introducing new work and reintroducing the masterpieces of such historically significant artists as Rembrandt, Sargeant and Bellows. A recent exhibition of Shaker furniture and other objects found well-known auctioneer, and Shaker authority, Willis Henry having a difficult time choosing a favorite.

But, there was a time when the grounds, according to local town seniors, were not only home to the Judah Alden House and its wing, a former post office and general store, but also a stable and fields where horses grazed. It was the idea of Mrs. Edith Greenleaf Weyerhaeuser, mother of current museum director, Charles Weyerhaeuser, who in turn was encouraged by her mother, to build a museum for her husband Carl's growing collection in order to share it with the community. Director Weyerhaeuser became involved with this dream after graduating from the School of the

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Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. "I shared the enthusiasm of my father (the former Carl Weyerhaeuser) for building a 'monument to wood' and constructing a contemporary building," he recalls

The model of the basic plan for the building was initiated by family friend Ture Bengtz, an artist and former teacher at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Bengtz oversaw the construction and worked closely with the architect, Richard Owen. Eventually, he became the museum's first director. One favorite photograph in the museum's archives is of a flatbed truck delivering the wood beams from Minnesota. In another, Bengtz inspects the newly dug foundation.

The museum also hosts the very popular Duxbury Art Association Annual Winter juried Show, running, this year, February 6 to April 10 in which artists from throughout the region display a varied selection of their artwork.